



Catherine E. Pugh
Mayor

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Laurie Feinberg,
Acting Director

December 11, 2018

REQUEST: Construct Third Floor and Rear Addition (Final Review)

ADDRESS: 1742-1746 Fleet Street (Fells Point Historic District)

RECOMMENDATION: Approval

STAFF: Caitlin Audette

APPLICANT: Brandon Chasen, Owner

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

Fells Point Historic District: The site is located in the Fells Point Historic District. Fells Point is significant as one of the original three settlements that merged to create the earliest form of Baltimore City. The area is directly linked to early maritime trade, an essential force in Baltimore's growth and development. In addition to the significance of Fells Point in the eighteenth century, the community has continued to play an important role in Baltimore history as a constantly growing and changing urban place. Many of the earliest extant buildings were expanded in the Victorian era creating a unique blend of pre-Revolutionary War and post-Civil War architectural styles and characteristics. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries Fells Point has been a diverse neighborhood composed of many ethnic groups each influencing the growth and development of the area.

Site Conditions/Architectural Description: The property is composed of three buildings 1742-1746 Fleet Street that are being consolidated under the address of 1742 Fleet Street. 1742 and 1744 Fleet Street, the two western most properties, are two-story two-bay brick buildings. Both buildings have been heavily modified with modern brick and a single simple steel door at each property. The historic second floor window openings at each property have been infilled with brick and the cornice at 1742 Fleet Street has been replaced with a modern brick cornice. The historic wood cornice remains at 1744 Fleet. 1746 Fleet Street is a three-story, three-bay brick building. The third floor is a contemporary alteration, dating to the second half of the 20th century. The window and door openings have been heavily modified with the use of glass block and brick infill. No historic cornice is present.

BACKGROUND

- No ATPs have been issued for the property.
- At the November 2018 Hearing the Commission voted five to four to approve the concept design for an addition to the properties.

PROPOSAL & APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

The owner intends to consolidate the three properties, construct a third floor to the existing two-story buildings and construct a rear addition, creating 14 apartments. Along with these modifications, the applicant proposes to modify the inappropriate alterations to the historic façade of all three buildings to be more sympathetic to the historic design. A new roof deck is proposed at the new rear addition.

ANALYSIS

Staff applied the following Design Guidelines:

1.18 Alterations and Additions states, “Design alterations and additions to be compatible and sympathetic to the character of the historic building.” The proposed alterations to the existing building generally meet this guideline as they remove existing non-historic alterations and replace them with more a more compatible design that references a typical historic pattern. The third floor and rear additions also maintain this ethos with a design that is compatible with the historic character of the existing historic elements and surrounding architecture.

Additionally, the guidelines states, “Avoid incompatible architectural features in new additions.” The proposed design generally meets this guideline as the new features include appropriate masonry, windows, and storefronts. However, minor changes to the proposed storefronts would allow the proposal to more fully meet this guideline. For example, the wood proportions of the proposed storefront surround should reference the proportions found throughout the building, and on similar storefronts in the historic district.

“Where an addition replicates the historic character of the main building, create subtle difference to clearly distinguish it as a later structure.” The addition at the third floor will need to meet this guideline. More information about the size of the brick and mortar can confirm that these minor details can act as the differentiating tool. The use of a minimal set back could also allow the vertical addition to meet this guideline.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Fells Point DRC has reviewed the application and provide the following comments;

- 1. The punched openings of the ground floor elevation are not acceptable. Applicant should remove the entire existing non-historic brick façade in order to properly build a true storefront condition of what would have been similarly there in the past. The panel asks the applicant to revisit this completely.*
- 2. The panel strongly does not see how the applicant will provide a seamless addition to the existing structures. It's strongly suggested that if in fact, the CHAP commission and staff does support this development strategy, that they should push the applicant to set the new additions slightly back off of the primary elevation and provide a more contemporary façade as opposed to attempting to replicate and fill-in the upper portion and provide a distinction between old and new. The wood cornice is currently intact and the applicant should leave it as is and not disturb the historic architectural element.*

3. *The original brick molded cornice of the most west property needs to be kept intact for that is the original cornice and be incorporated into the new addition design. The brick wall that has been put a top of the original cornice should be removed. See attached photo, (**photo is of cornice at 1742 Fleet**) you should be able to clearly see that below the newly built brick, there exists the original brick cornice which needs to be retained.*

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the proposal with the following conditions and that any remaining final details be reviewed by staff.

- Exploratory demolition must be completed to verify the condition of the historic cornice at 1742 Fleet. Details must be provided to CHAP staff for review prior to moving forward with any plans.
- Details of the brick and mortar for the proposed vertical addition must be provided to CHAP staff to verify how these will match this historic brick, and how they will demonstrate the evolution of the building.
- Slight changes to the proposed storefront should be completed to move accurately create a “storefront”. These may include the removal of the “water table” paneling, closer review of proportions, and review of materials and colors to be used.
- The multi-panel door proposed for 1742 Fleet should be changed to either a ½ lite panel or full lite wood door.



**Eric Holcomb,
Director**

MAP AND IMAGES

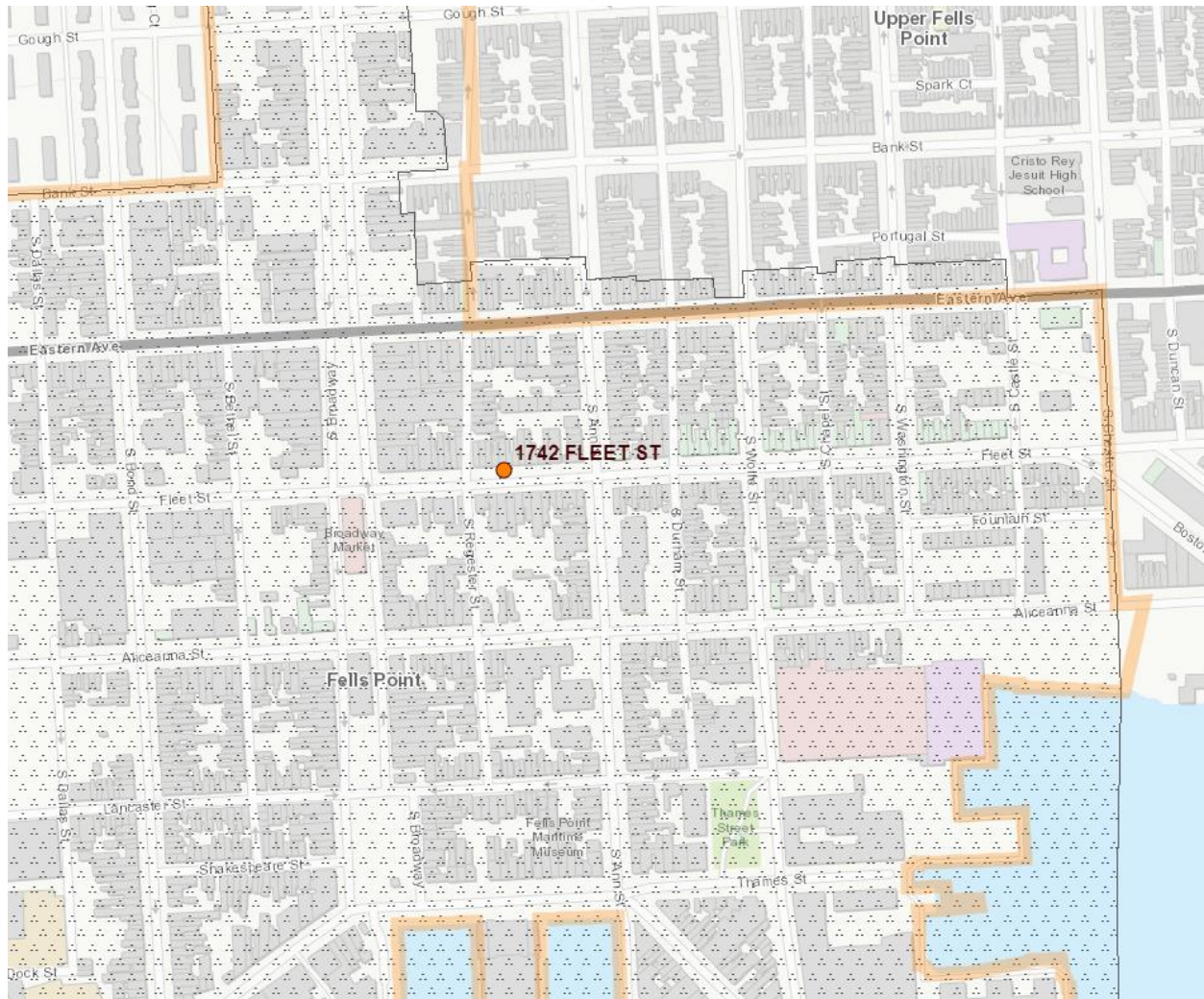


Image 1– Location of 1742 Fleet Street within the Fells Point Historic District



Image 2– Aerial view of buildings looking north



Image 3– Aerial view of rear of buildings looking south



Image 4– Image of front elevation. Interior work has begun at the property.



Image 5– Image of front elevation looking northwest from Fleet Street



Image 6– Image of front elevation looking northeast.